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ABSTRACT

The faculty curriculum leader is envisioned as a teacher with some portion of time allocated to activities, other than direct instruction, that encompass a variety of responsibilities related to curriculum, staff, and organizational and instructional needs and improvement. This role would be assumed by individuals with formal or informal responsibilities. This paper presents a synthesis of studies and conceptual views of this role. In the first part of the paper, the purposes and goals to be achieved by faculty curriculum leaders are described, e.g., leadership for improving and evaluating the curriculum, staff development, and the design of practice. The rationale for the faculty curriculum leader role is set forth in the second part of the paper. The final part of the paper outlines organizational elements for implementing the faculty curriculum leader's role: (1) role description, authority, qualifications; (2) communications and networking; (3) facilities and resources; (4) incentives, rewards, and recognition; (5) preparation and skill development; and (6) activities and operating procedures. (JD)

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Designing Faculty Curriculum Leader Roles

Education, teaching and schools are currently undergoing a multi-dimensional analysis and revision. Within this arena of change we need to take a new look at faculty leadership roles. A largely incidental evolution of these roles in the public schools has resulted in a multitude of different job titles and positions, many only vaguely defined, but which include a very large number of teachers (10-15 percent of the teaching force). These roles i.e., department chair, reading consultant and special education coordinator are usually part-time, given little recognition, but integral to the effective operation of schools (Hatfield et al., 1986). Many other teachers are also engaged in significant leadership roles but have no formal title.

Through analyzing the current organizational structure of schools and a comprehensive synthesis of studies related to leadership roles the concept of a Faculty Curriculum Leader has evolved. This concept is distinctive from lead teachers, career ladders, master teachers, mentor teachers and the traditional role of department chairs or curriculum consultants. It is a concept, however, which may apply to any of these positions and requires a minimum of reorganization, new policies, and legislation to establish.

As envisioned here the faculty curriculum leader would be a teacher with some portion of time allocated to activities other than direct instruction which encompass a variety of responsibilities related to curriculum, staff, organizational and instructional needs and improvement. This role would be assumed

by individuals with formal or informal responsibilities for the roles indicated above. With a suitable number of curriculum leaders in each school the principal's role would become primarily a leadership activity working with curriculum leaders. Where opportunities exist for informal leadership roles these should also be given consideration and supported by the organization. By grounding the curriculum leaders's role in a subject area definite responsibility can be established. By extending the role to include a wide variety of curriculum, staff, organizational and instructional development activities greater cohesion of program and personnel support can be achieved. A sufficient number of curriculum leaders are needed in a school so they can relate to and work with a limited number of teachers. This arrangement also provides a large cadre of the teaching force who will be directly involved in leadership and policy issues at the school level. Establishing school and district councils for these curriculum leaders also offers a unique opportunity to involve many teachers in a broader communications and planning network.

This paper represents a synthesis of studies and conceptual views of this role organized in a form described by Hatfield et al. (1985) needed for designing an educational practice. According to this model the design of an educational practice, i.e. the use of curriculum leaders, requires a synthesis of related studies organized into a particular format which includes (a) the purposes or goals to be achieved, (b) a rationale and/or

conceptual perspective, and (c) a set of organizational elements which delineate the major activities and conditions for conducting the practice. The resulting synthesis and structure of knowledge then serves as the basis on which to develop a design for using the practice in a given setting. The following items have been formulated by using this approach and represent the organization for the remainder of this paper.

A. Purposes/Goals to be achieved by Faculty Curriculum Leaders.

B. Rationale for the Faculty Curriculum Leader Role.

C. Organizational elements for implementing the Faculty Curriculum Leader Role.

1. Role description, authority, qualifications
2. Communications and networking
3. Facilities and resources
4. Incentives, rewards and recognition
5. Preparation and skill development
6. Activities and operating procedures

Purposes/Goals to be Achieved by Curriculum Leaders

Interpreting the expected outcomes of the work of curriculum leaders provides a basis on which to design a specific plan for their use and the means to determine their effectiveness. The following purposes/goals have been identified by analyzing studies of related jobs.

1. Leadership for improvement and evaluation of the curriculum, staff development and the design of practice.

2. Support teachers in fulfilling their teaching responsibilities, provide linkage to resource networks, and provide recognition and feedback.

3. Provide input and articulation between teacher and institutional goals, school policy, parental and community relations, and the school culture.

4. Serve as preceptor for interns, new and reassigned

teachers.

Activities related to these goals would be primarily carried out with teachers in the particular curricular area of the curriculum leader while working within a prescribed setting.

Leadership for Improvement and Evaluation of the Curriculum, Staff Development and the Design of Practice

An overall perspective on leadership may help place some of the issues for this goal into context. Sergiovanni (1984) describes five forces leaders should attend to; (a) technical, (b) human, (c) educational, (d) symbolic, and (e) culture. These forces encompass managing, relationships, professional knowledge, focusing on goals and creating a desirable environment. Applying these concepts to the expectations for curriculum leaders adds a qualitative aspect needed in understanding the role.

Helping peers improve their practice is not a newly discovered idea, but does seem to be getting greater visibility at the present time. Doherty (1967) reports on a Carnegie funded project in which a group of teachers within one district were provided preparation for leading inservice activities. One of their roles as inservice leaders was to assist in the identification and development of courses requested by the regular staff and then serve as instructors of the courses.

Cooper et al. (1976) carried out an extensive study of school based teacher educators (i.e., department chairs, team leaders, consultants, supervisors), and identified their responsibilities as including curriculum development, support systems, resources, personnel issues and inservice. A study in

New York City schools by McDonald (1980) generated information on teacher consultants who provided individualized teacher assistance. These consultants engaged in designing curriculum, modeling instructional practice, locating resources, and assisting teachers to improve their instruction.

Based on a study in which instructional leaders assumed responsibility for implementing a new practice Kenney and Roberts (1984) provide additional support for the value of and skills needed by curriculum leaders. They also concluded that the role can be effective without a formal title if given the necessary expertise and administrative support.

Hatfield et al. (1986) identified the roles of teacher leaders with extended professional roles in several Michigan schools. Included in the study were department chairs, grade level chairs, reading consultants and others with related positions. Regardless of job title and assignment nearly all of these individuals engaged in activities related to curriculum development, leading teams of teachers for improvement of instruction, helping to organize inservice programs and developing courses.

Support Teachers in Fulfilling Their Teaching Responsibilities, Provide Linkage to Resource Networks and Provide Recognition and Feedback

Emphasis on providing professional support is another form of effective leadership. A study by Gersten et al. (1982) led to the identification of four major support functions important to teachers; (a) giving feedback about instruction, (b) providing incentives for implementing programs, (c) demonstrating a visible

commitment to the program, and (d) monitoring the progress of all students through the curriculum. Further, the organizational position of the leader providing these functions was not considered important.

Personal and professional support is a significant factor for most workers. In a description of a professional development leader for one school Solo (1985) indicates the reality of this situation by stating the leader needs to establish a person-to-person relationship with the teachers, give feedback and sometimes to just "hold hands." In a summary of related research Hawley (1985) states that,

> Almost every study of teacher motivation, job satisfaction, or attrition concludes that the most important thing teachers want from their work is intrinsic satisfaction derived from contributions made to student achievement. (p. 57)

Rosenholtz and Smylie (1984) found in their review of research that key factors contributing to teachers achieving greater efficacy in student learning were; better preparation, professional interaction and collegial activity. Providing direct assistance to teachers for instructional problems is implied here and is supported by a study by Bean and Eichelberger (1985) on the difficulties with pull-out programs.

Studies reviewed by Ritchie (1976) indicated that leaders of small work groups need technical expertise, and provide a linkage to other parts of the organization. Helping workers obtain the things they need for the job created significant credibility for these leaders with their coworkers. LeBreton et al. (1979) have

also identified the importance of aiding professionals in maintaining a system for keeping up to date and adjusting the support system due to changing conditions. An awareness system should enable the teacher to recognize problems and/or opportunities, in connection with his/her practice, which need attention.

Provide Input and Articulation Between Teacher and Institutional Goals, School Policy, Parental and Community Relations, and the School Culture

Goodlad's (1972) Cooperative School Project suggests a need to focus on school culture. A major conclusion from this study indicates that school improvement requires school-wide changes related to the culture, the goals of the school, the personal relationships, and a relationship to the larger educational system. Facilitating these relationships and articulating the difference in perspective seem vital to the welfare of the schools functioning.

Spector's (1984) case study of an innovation requiring teachers to change their practice supports this need for promoting the school culture. In this study both institutional and departmental norms were considered important for implementation of practice. Positive results occurred when teachers perceived their institutional setting had encouraged previous innovations and provided rewards. Positive departmental perceptions included a routine of experimentation, emotional support by peers, success by participating students, and a feeling that it was all right for the innovation to fail.

Serve as Preceptor For Interns, New and Reassigned Teachers

Many districts have established teacher advisor and mentor roles to aid beginning teachers and to direct experiences for preservice teachers. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg district (Hanes and Mitchell, 1985) uses mentors to work with beginning teachers. The teachers receiving this assistance report it was useful and contributed to more interactions about teaching, and helped with student behavior problems and instructional issues. Studies of the California mentor plan (Wagner, 1985) indicate the most commonly assigned responsibilities of mentors were responding to individual teacher requests for staff development, facilitating district-wide staff development, assisting teachers to locate and organize curriculum materials, develop curriculum, and provide classroom assistance to beginning teachers. Career ladder programs which have been established in many states frequently include, at one of the higher levels, a role as supervisor of interns (Cornett, 1985). Cornett also reports that benefits from the mentor and career ladder programs include an increase in professional dialogue among teachers, increased leadership skills, and changes in the evaluation of teachers.

This leadership role is clearly becoming established in many schools with many indications of success.

Opportunities for Increased Professional Responsibility

Each of the preceding goals reflects some aspect of the faculty curriculum leader role and implies a professional responsibility in addition to a more traditional classroom assignment. The test of these responsibilities for the

improvement of the profession and of schools is whether enough teachers perceive the extended role as sufficiently useful and challenging to enhance their motivation and performance. A major issue relating to this question is that of career development and how increased emphasis, preparation and recognition of the role of curriculum leaders would contribute to these conditions.

Dalton et al. (1977) studied several organizations employing professional workers and identified four stages in career development; (a) apprenticeship or dependency, (b) independence with a high level of job expertise, (c) a mentor phase where individuals assist beginners to develop and become productive, and (d) a status for influencing organizational operations and decisions. Many but not all of the individuals in the higher stages of career development were involved in formal assignments within the institution.

It does appear that multiple roles and responsibilities are important for professional workers as they mature and desire to assume additional responsibility and organizational involvement. This career development model also suggests that the form and extent of leadership activities varies with the level of career development of those individuals with whom the curriculum leader is working.

Rationale for the Curriculum Leader Role

The rationale and justification for the curriculum leader role presented here rests on (a) the responsibilities or functions of teaching, (b) the present roles of teacher leaders, (c) the school organizational culture, and (d) professional

opportunities for career development.

Very often the complexity and range of tasks carried out by teachers is ignored. Although well documented (Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975) a comprehensive and conceptual view of the functions and tasks of teaching has been difficult to develop. Some proposals for teaching functions have been put forth (California Teachers Association, 1964), and some are now being used in teacher evaluation systems (Lexington City Schools). In a wide ranging analysis and review process based on extensive input from teachers a taxonomy of teaching functions and tasks has been formulated by Hatfield (1984). Major categories or teaching functions in this taxonomy include:

1. Develop curriculum plans
2. Provide for the educational needs of individual students
3. Design instructional programs & materials
4. Facilitate instructional activities and management
5. Assess and report student learning and growth
6. General institutional and professional activities

By considering the tasks related to each of these major functions, together with the need for continuing education, the individual teacher is easily overwhelmed and anxious to establish as much routine and stability as possible in his/her work. Here then is one argument for the role of curriculum leader; to provide a teacher with assistance, support and leadership in fulfilling each of these teaching functions effectively. Evident in the list of these functions is that in-class responsibilities do not give the whole picture of teaching. Yet, for many teachers these in-class activities together with the immediate needs of preparation and grading papers is all that can be mastered.

Studies on current roles of teacher leaders (Hatfield et al., 1986; Barnett, 1984) indicate many related tasks regardless of job titles or assignment. An analysis of these tasks seems to line up closely with the general tasks of teaching; developing new curricula, learning new strategies for teaching, or working on ways to improve the educational climate in a school. In addition these individuals engage in activities for policy development, community relations, inservice for other teachers, providing new resources, giving personal and professional support, coaching and giving feedback, and development of subject guidelines.

The similarity in teaching tasks and the focus of teacher leaders is not surprising, but does pointedly reflect an extension of role not a different role. The role also seems to be less one of management and more one of technical support and leadership. Such roles for small group leaders is consistent with organizational studies (Ritchie, 1976).

By maintaining an ongoing teaching role in addition to additional leadership responsibilities the curriculum leader is extending the use of his/her knowledge and skills. In the study by Hatfield et al. (1986) teacher leaders carried out many of the same tasks regardless of job title. A distinction in subject specialization appeared to create a separateness among these individuals, however, this condition appeared to result from a very limited concept of the added responsibilities and how these relate to other subject areas. Although combining teaching with

an additional leadership role is more demanding teachers in the study by Hatfield et al. (1986) indicated they preferred this arrangement and desired to continue in the dual role.

Studies of organizational climate or culture have shown that innovation (Spector, 1984), and individual motivation (Strauss, 1976) are strongly affected by the culture. Because organizations are social and people are greatly influenced by social relationships these effects are expected. At issue here is the development of an organizational culture which supports conditions for professional growth and a productive work environment. Events which make up such cultures include leadership processes, reward forces, communication patterns, control procedures, and mechanisms for decision making and goal setting (Ritchie, 1976). If one can assume that schools need to incorporate innovative practices and that motivated staff are desirable then creating the conditions described is appropriate.

Also identified with the organizational culture is an educational climate supportive of the overall goals of the institution and with which students can identify and find support. This climate and the general school goals are much more comprehensive than the focus on any one subject area or teacher. This tension between an individual's work and the institution can be limiting or it can be reduced and used to articulate the different perspectives. The need for articulation between the individual and the organization in todays schools is clearly described by Fenstermacher and Berliner (1985),

It is no longer possible for teachers to close their

> classroom doors an, in doing so, disconnect themselves from the world beyond. Modern teachers function in a complex environment of policy, law, regulation, special programs, organizational structures, communication systems, and professional associations. (pp. 282-283)

Bridging the work of the individual teacher with these external realities would seem to require leadership which is closely tied to the teacher, but also operates in a broader setting.

Opportunities for increased professional responsibility and challenge are needed by many individuals as they mature in their work. Recent legislation and policy development in many states is obviously an attempt to reduce the present organizational restrictions in schools. Proposals for career ladders for teachers, establishing mentor teachers and implementing programs with lead teachers all reflect this concern. Providing more alternatives and establishing more visible or recognized professional roles for teachers is being widely promoted. Unfortunately, most current proposals do not take into account the present system of organizational structure or roles currently in existence. Whatever provision is made for increasing the leadership or professionally recognized roles for teachers it will need to contribute to the welfare of the schools as an organization and be compatible with the organizational goals. This role of curriculum leader, distinctive from the typical teacher and principal role, may appear simplistic if judged by the multiple levels of a career ladder. However, the substance and visibility of a leadership roles as proposed here may outweigh this limitation.

This rationale for the faculty curriculum leader role is based on several issues. The complexity of the teaching role leads to the need to pool resources and efforts to be effective and to insure that individual teacher efforts are articulated with the school as a whole. Enhancing the support and motivation of individual teachers is an ongoing need requiring considerable personal interaction. Providing a leadership role compatible with the school as an organization is important and centering the role on the multiple subject areas appears necessary. At the same time, giving the curriculum leader the responsibility to bring together activities related to curriculum, staff, organizational and instructional improvement provides a necessary integration and efficiency in the school operation. Establishing meaningful and recognized roles for a significant number of teachers who continue to maintain a teaching responsibility is one way to enhance professional opportunities.

Organizational Elements for using Faculty Curriculum Leaders

Given these purposes and a rationale for the use of faculty curriculum leaders the following set of elements central to the role have been formulated from the related studies.

1. Role, Job Description, Authority and Qualifications.
2. Communications and Networking.
3. Facilities and Resources.
4. Support, Rewards and Recognition.
5. Preparation and Skill Development.
6. Activities and Operating Procedures:

- Provide leadership of curriculum development teams.
- Provide leadership of staff development activities.
- Provide leadership for the design/improvement of educational practice.
- Support teachers in fulfilling teaching responsibilities.
- Articulate teacher goals with organizational goals.
- Provide network to professional research and development sources.
- Provide resource and development support.
- Tutor interns and new or reassigned teachers.
- Provide recognition and feedback to teachers.
- Participate in development and implementation of school policies.
- Provide leadership in creating positive professional and educational school culture and communications network.
- Provide leadership in parental and school relationships.
- Provide specialized instructional needs for students.

Summary

This organization of the knowledge base for faculty curriculum leaders provides a format for describing or developing a comprehensive model within a district. Such a model should be tied to the contextual aspects of the district and should be developed using a process of participation by the professional staff. Implementation of the model will take time as roles and relationships have been altered.

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